

حكم صلاة التوبة

Ruling Concerning *Ṣalāt-ut-Tawbah* (the Prayer of Repentance)

بسم الله الرحمن الرحيم

Question: What is the ruling concerning *Ṣalāt al-Tawbah*?

Answer: If the question is in reference to a ḥadīth attributed to Abū Tharr (رضي الله عنه), which states:

يَا رَسُولَ اللَّهِ، كَيْفَ يَنْتَبِغِي لِلْمُذْنِبِ أَنْ يَتُوبَ مِنَ الذُّنُوبِ؟ قَالَ: يَغْتَسِلُ لَيْلَةَ الْاِثْنَيْنِ بَعْدَ الْوَيْتْرِ، وَيُصَلِّيْ اِثْنَتَيْ عَشْرَةَ رَكْعَةً يَقْرَأُ فِي كُلِّ رَكْعَةٍ: فَاتِحَةَ الْكِتَابِ، وَقُلْ يَا أَيُّهَا الْكَافِرُونَ مَرَّةً، وَعَشْرَ مَرَّاتٍ قُلْ هُوَ اللَّهُ أَحَدٌ، ثُمَّ يَقُومُ وَيُصَلِّيْ أَرْبَعَ رَكْعَاتٍ، ثُمَّ يُسَلِّمُ وَيَسْجُدُ، وَيَقْرَأُ فِي سُجُودِهِ آيَةَ الْكُرْسِيِّ مَرَّةً، ثُمَّ يَرْفَعُ رَأْسَهُ وَيَسْتَغْفِرُ مِائَةَ مَرَّةٍ، وَيَقُولُ مِائَةَ مَرَّةٍ: لَا حَوْلَ وَلَا قُوَّةَ إِلَّا بِاللَّهِ، وَيُصْبِحُ مِنَ الْعَدِ صَائِمًا، وَيُصَلِّيْ عِنْدَ إِفْطَارِهِ رَكْعَتَيْنِ بِفَاتِحَةِ الْكِتَابِ وَخَمْسِينَ مَرَّةً: قُلْ هُوَ اللَّهُ أَحَدٌ وَيَقُولُ: يَا مُقَلِّبَ الْقُلُوبِ تَقَبَّلْ تَوْبَتِي كَمَا تَقَبَّلْتَ مِنْ نَبِيِّكَ دَاوُدَ، وَاعْصِمْنِي كَمَا عَصَمْتَ يَحْيَى بْنَ زَكَرِيَّا، وَأَصْلِحْنِي كَمَا أَصْلَحْتَ أَوْلِيَاءَكَ الصَّالِحِينَ، اللَّهُمَّ إِنِّي نَادِمٌ عَلَى مَا فَعَلْتُ فَأَعْصِمْنِي حَتَّى لَا أَعْصِيكَ، ثُمَّ يَقُومُ نَادِمًا، فَإِنَّ رَأْسَ مَالِ النَّاسِ النَّدَامَةُ، فَمَنْ فَعَلَ ذَلِكَ تَقَبَّلَ اللَّهُ تَوْبَتَهُ

O Messenger of Allāh, how should one who sins repent for the sins? He said, “He should perform *ghusl* on Monday night following the *witr*, and pray twelve *rak`āt* reciting in every *rak`ah* the *Fātiḥah* and ‘*Qul yā ayyuhal-kāfirūn*’ once, and ‘*Qul huwal-Lāhu aḥad*’ ten times. Then he should stand and pray four *rak`āt* and perform the *taslīm* and make *sujūd* (prostration) while reciting in his *sajdah āyat al-Kursī* once. Then he should raise his head and perform *istighfār* one hundred times, and say one hundred times, ‘*Lā ḥawla wa lā quwwata illā bil-Lāh.*’ He should then wake the next morning while in the state of fasting, and during his *iftār* (the breaking of the fast) he should pray two *rak`āt* reciting the *Fātiḥah* of the Book, and fifty times, ‘*Qul huwal-Lāhu aḥad.*’ And he should say, ‘*Yā muqallib al-qulūb taqabbal tawbatī kamā taqabalta min Nabīyyika Dāwūd, wa`šimnī kamā `aṣamta Yaḥyā ibn Zakariyyā. Wa aṣliḥnī kamā aṣlaḥta awliyā`akaṣ-ṣāliḥīn. Allāhumma innī nādīmun `alā mā fa`altu, fa`šimnī ḥattā lā a`ṣiyaka* (O Changer of Hearts, accept my repentance just as You accepted from Your Prophet Dāwūd. And protect me just as You protected Yaḥyā son of Zakariyyā. And better my affairs just as You bettered the affairs of Your righteous allies. O Allāh, I am remorseful for what I have done, so protect me so that I do not disobey you).’ He

should then stand in remorse, for truly the capital sum of the one who repents is remorse. Whoever does this, Allāh will accept his repentance.

This was reported by Ibn al-Jawzī in *al-Mawdhū`āt al-Kubrā*¹ under the chapter heading *Ṣalāt-ut-Tawbah* (Prayer of Repentance), and ash-Shawkānī included it as well in *al-Fawā'id al-Majmū'ah*² under the same chapter heading – and both classed this narration as a fabrication. Likewise, Ath-Thahabī.³ The *isnād* contains a number of people who are unknown, and it is not permissible for a person to act upon this ḥadīth.

If the question, however, pertains to the ḥadīth of `Alī ibn Abī Tālib (رضي الله عنه), who narrates saying:

كُنْتُ رَجُلًا إِذَا سَمِعْتُ مِنْ رَسُولِ اللَّهِ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ حَدِيثًا نَفَعَنِي اللَّهُ مِنْهُ بِمَا شَاءَ أَنْ يَنْفَعَنِي، وَإِذَا حَدَّثَنِي رَجُلٌ مِنْ أَصْحَابِهِ اسْتَحْلَفْتُهُ، فَإِذَا حَلَفَ لِي صَدَّقْتُهُ. قَالَ: وَحَدَّثَنِي أَبُو بَكْرٍ، وَصَدَّقَ أَبُو بَكْرٍ - رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ - أَنَّهُ قَالَ سَمِعْتُ رَسُولَ اللَّهِ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ يَقُولُ: مَا مِنْ عَبْدٍ يُذْنِبُ ذَنْبًا فَيُحْسِنُ الطُّهُورَ ثُمَّ يَقُومُ فَيُصَلِّي رَكْعَتَيْنِ ثُمَّ يَسْتَغْفِرُ اللَّهَ إِلَّا غَفَرَ اللَّهُ لَهُ

I was a man, who when I heard a tradition from the Messenger of Allah (صلى الله عليه وسلم) Allah benefited me with it as much as He willed. But if a man from his Companions narrated a tradition to me, I made him swear (that he heard it from the Messenger of Allāh – صلى الله عليه وسلم). And if he swore, I trusted him.

Abū Bakr narrated to me a tradition, and Abū Bakr narrated truthfully (رضي الله عنه), that he said, “I heard the Messenger of Allāh (صلى الله عليه وسلم) say, ‘There is no servant who commits a sin, so he perfects the *wudhū*’, stands and prays two *rak`āt*, and then performs *istighfār* (seeking forgiveness from Allāh), except that Allāh will forgive him.’”

Then this was reported by Ibn al-Mubārak, aṭ-Ṭayālīsī, al-Ḥumaydī, Aḥmad, Ibn Mājah, Abū Dāwūd, at-Tirmithī, an-Nasā'ī, al-Bazzār, al-Marwazī, Abū Ya`lā, aṭ-Ṭahāwī, Ibn Ḥibbān, and aṭ-Ṭabarānī.⁴

¹ *al-Mawdhū`āt al-Kubrā* (vol. 2, pg. 133)

² *al-Fawā'id al-Majmū'ah* (vol. 1, pg. 34)

³ *Tartīb al-Mawdhū`āt* (pg. 164)

⁴ See *Kitāb az-Zuhr war-Raqā'iq* (#1088), *Musnad Abī Dāwūd aṭ-Ṭayālīsī* (#1), *Musnad al-Ḥumaydī* (#1 and #4), *Musnad al-Imām Aḥmad ibn Ḥambal* (#2, #47, #48, and #56), *Sunan Ibn Mājah* (#1395), *Sunan Abī Dāwūd* (#1521), *Al-Jāmi`-ul-Kabīr* (#406 and #3006), *Kitāb as-Sunan al-Kubrā* (#10175, #10178, and #11012), *Al-Baḥr-uz-Zakḥkhār* (#8 - #11), *Musnad Abī Bakr in aṣ-Ṣiddīq* (#9 - #11), *Musnad Abī Ya`lā al-Mūṣilī* (#1), *Sharḥ Mushkil-il-Āthār* (#6033, #6034, #6038, #6047, and #6041), *Al-Iḥsān fī Taqrīb Ṣaḥīḥ Ibn Ḥibbān* (#623), *Al-Mu`jam al-Awsaṭ* (#584) – respectively.

All of them report this ḥadīth by way of `Alī ibn Rabī`ah al-Wālibī, from Asmā' ibn al-Ḥakam al-Fazārī, from `Alī ibn Abī Ṭālib, from Abū Bakr aṣ-Ṣiddīq (رضي الله عنهما); and this *isnād* will be discussed shortly.

Al-Bazzār also reports this ḥadīth in his *Musnad* with two *asānīd*, one from Sa'd ibn Sa'id al-Maqburī, and one from Abū Mu`āwiyah, and both of them from `Abd-ul-Lāh ibn Sa'id, from his grandfather Abū Sa'id al-Maqburī, from `Alī ibn Abī Ṭālib (رضي الله عنه) from Abū Bakr aṣ-Ṣiddīq (رضي الله عنه).⁵ Sa'd ibn Sa'id was weakened by al-Bazzār, al-Bukhārī, Yaḥyā ibn Ma`īn and others, so this *isnād* is *dha`īf* (weak). And `Abd-ul-Lāh ibn Sa'id was classed as *matrūk* by Aḥmad, al-Bukhārī, an-Nasā'ī, and others, so this *isnād* is *dha`īf* as well.

Ad-Dāraquṭnī reported this ḥadīth in his *ʿIlal*, mentioning eleven total *asānīd* for this ḥadīth (including the two additional ones reported by al-Bazzār), all of them with a chain to `Alī ibn Abī Ṭālib from Abū Bakr (رضي الله عنهما), and all of them containing either those who are weak, extremely weak, accused of lying, or accused of fabricating *aḥādīth*. He concluded that the best and most correct of these *asānīd* is that of `Uthmān ibn al-Mughīrah, from `Alī ibn Rabī`ah al-Wālibī, from Asmā' ibn al-Ḥakam. But this phrasing should not be misunderstood to mean that he authenticates this *isnād*, or this ḥadīth – only that this *isnād* is the most correct of the ones attributed to `Alī ibn Abī Ṭālib from Abū Bakr (رضي الله عنهما).

Aṭ-Ṭabarānī also reported this ḥadīth with a slightly different wording, but as a ḥadīth from Abū-Dardā' (رضي الله عنه) who reported that he heard the Prophet (صلى الله عليه وسلم) say:

مَا مِنْ مُسْلِمٍ يُذْنِبُ ذَنْبًا فَيَتَوَضَّأُ، ثُمَّ يُصَلِّي رَكَعَتَيْنِ أَوْ أَرْبَعًا، مَفْرُوضَةً أَوْ غَيْرَ مَفْرُوضَةٍ،
ثُمَّ يَسْتَغْفِرُ اللَّهَ إِلَّا غَفَرَ اللَّهُ لَهُ

There is no Muslim who commits a sin, performs *wudhū`*, prays two *rak`āt* or four – either obligatory or non-obligatory, and then performs *istighfār* (seeking forgiveness from Allāh), except that Allāh will forgive him.⁶

This *isnād* comes by the way of Ṣadaqah ibn Abī Sahl, from Kathīr Abūl-Fadhl, from Yūsuf ibn `Abd-ul-Lāh ibn Salām, from Abū-Dardā', and both Ṣadaqah and Kathīr are unknown, so this *isnād* is *dha`īf*.

As for the *isnād* of Asmā' ibn al-Ḥakam al-Fazārī from `Alī (رضي الله عنه) from Abū Bakr (رضي الله عنه), then although at-Tirmithī classed it as *ḥasan*, al-Bazzār rejected the ḥadīth because of Asmā' ibn al-Ḥakam saying he is *majhūl* (unknown), and this is the only ḥadīth known from him. There is in fact another ḥadīth known from him as reported by `Abd-ur-Razzāq⁷ and Ibn Abī Shaybah,⁸ where he states:

⁵ *Al-Baḥr-uz-Zakhkhār* (#6 and #7).

⁶ *Al-Mu`jam al-Awsaṭ* (#5026).

⁷ *Muṣannaf `Abd-ur-Razzāq* (#1695).

⁸ *Muṣannaf Ibn Abī Shaybah* (#7544).

سَأَلْتُ رَجُلًا مِنْ أَصْحَابِ النَّبِيِّ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ عَنِ الْبُصَاقِ فِي الْمَسْجِدِ، فَقَالَ: هِيَ خَطِيئَةٌ، وَكَفَّارَتُهَا دَفْنُهَا

I asked a man from the Companions of the Prophet (صلى الله عليه وسلم) about the sputum in the *masjid*, and he said, “It is an offense, and its expiation is burying it”

The wording of Ibn Abī Shaybah is, “I asked about everything, even about spit in the *masjid*.” The *isnād* of `Abd-ur-Razzāq has this from ar-Rukayn from Asmā’ directly, whereas the *isnād* of Ibn Abī Shaybah reports this from ar-Rukayn, from his father, from Asmā’ – with a person in between. `Abd-ur-Razzāq and Ibn Abī Shaybah are the only two who seem to have reported this ḥadīth from Asmā’.

Al-`Ijlī classed Asmā’ ibn al-Ḥakam as *thiqah*.⁹ Muḥammad ibn Sa’d said, “His *aḥādīth* are few.”¹⁰ Ibn Ḥibbān mentioned Asmā’ in *Ath-Thuqāt*, and said, “He makes mistakes.”¹¹ And Yaḥyā ibn Ma`īn said, “He is a man who is not known.”¹²

After reporting this ḥadīth, al-Bukhārī said, “Nothing comes narrated from Asmā’ ibn al-Ḥakam except this ḥadīth, and one other, and no one has followed him in his narrations. Indeed, the Companions of the Prophet (صلى الله عليه وسلم) used to narrate from one another, and they would not make one another swear (that they heard the tradition).”¹³ Adding to what al-Bukhārī stated, al-`Uqaylī included Asmā’ ibn al-Ḥakam in his book *Kitāb adh-Dhu`afā’ al-Kabīr*, and said that `Alī had heard from `Umar, and never made him take an oath (that he heard it from the Prophet - صلى الله عليه وسلم).¹⁴

If Asmā’ is only known for two *aḥādīth*, and he makes mistakes, the ḥadīth about the sputum is confirmed from the ḥadīth of Anas ibn Mālik (رضي الله عنه) in the *Ṣaḥīḥayn*,¹⁵ so the narration in question would have to be the one considered faulty. In addition to this, the *tawthīq* (considering as trustworthy) of Asmā’ ibn al-Ḥakam by al-`ijlī would have to be disregarded, since no one followed him in considering him *thiqah* or acceptable, so he is for the most part *majhūl* (unknown).¹⁶ Therefore, the narration as a whole would have to be considered weak, because of this *isnād*, especially if this *isnād* is the best of them.

Even if one were to assume that Asmā’ ibn al-Ḥakam is known, then there is also the issue of *tafarrud* (being alone in narrating), which would affect the acceptability of this narration. There are many who narrated from `Alī ibn Abī Ṭālib (رضي الله عنه), amongst them are his major

⁹ *Ma`rifat-uth-Thiqāt* (vol. 1, pg. 223).

¹⁰ *Kitāb at-Ṭabaqāt-il-Kubrā* (vol. 8, pg. 344).

¹¹ *Kitāb-uth-Thuqāt* (vol. 4, pg. 56).

¹² *Su`ālāt Ibn al-Junayd li Yaḥyā ibn Ma`īn* (pg. 368-369).

¹³ *At-Tārīkh al-Kabīr* (vol. 2, pg. 54).

¹⁴ *Kitāb adh-Dhu`afā’ al-Kabīr* (vol. 1, pg. 107).

¹⁵ See *Ṣaḥīḥ al-Bukhārī* (#415) and *Ṣaḥīḥ Muslim* (#554).

¹⁶ I asked Shaykh Māhir ibn Yāsīn al-Faḥl about the *infirād* (being alone) of al-`ijlī in *tawthīq*, and he replied saying that he is *mutasāhil* (relaxed).

companions, such as his sons as well as `Abīdah as-Salmānī, Qays ibn Abī Ḥāzim, `Alqamah ibn Qays, Masrūq, Abū Rajā' al-`Utāridī and others, and none of them reported this narration from him. So where are the major narrators from `Alī ibn Abī Ṭālib (رضي الله عنه) and this narration? And the fact that this narration only comes by way of other weak or very weak chains, only strengthens the point that Asmā' is not a reliable narrator, even if he were known, as mentioned by Ibn Ḥibbān.

So as for a specific prayer called *Ṣalāt-ut-Tawbah* that is performed when a person sins, then this cannot be confirmed from the Messenger of Allāh (صلى الله عليه وسلم). This is not to say, however, that such an action will not erase sins, because the generality of this can be found in the Qur'ān. Allāh (عز وجل) says:

﴿وَأَقِمِ الصَّلَاةَ طَرَفِي النَّهَارِ وَزُلْفًا مِّنَ اللَّيْلِ إِنَّ الْحَسَنَاتِ يُذْهِبْنَ السَّيِّئَاتِ ذَلِكَ ذِكْرٌ لِلذَّاكِرِينَ﴾

And perform the prayers at the two ends of the day and in some hours of the night. Truly, the good deeds remove the evil deeds. That is a reminder (an advice) for the mindful (those who accept advice) ¹⁷

There are also a number of authentic *aḥādīth* that confirm this, such as the ḥadīth of `Uthmān ibn `Affān (رضي الله عنه) who narrated that the Messenger of Allāh (صلى الله عليه وسلم) said:

مَنْ تَوَضَّأَ نَحْوَ وُضُوئِي هَذَا، ثُمَّ صَلَّى رَكْعَتَيْنِ لَا يُحَدِّثُ فِيهِمَا نَفْسَهُ، غُفِرَ لَهُ مَا تَقَدَّمَ مِنْ ذَنْبِهِ

Whoever performs *wudhū'* similar to this *wudhū'* of mine and then prays two *rak'āt* without allowing his thoughts to be distracted (with matters not related to the prayer), his past sins will be forgiven. ¹⁸

And similarly, Abū Umāmah Al-Bāhilī (رضي الله عنه) narrated that the Messenger of Allāh (صلى الله عليه وسلم) said:

مَا مِنْكُمْ رَجُلٌ يَقْرُبُ وَضُوءَهُ، فَيَتَمَضَّمُ وَيَسْتَنْشِقُ فَيَنْتَثِرُ إِلَّا خَرَّتْ خَطَايَا وَجْهِهِ وَفِيهِ وَخَيَاشِيمِهِ، ثُمَّ إِذَا غَسَلَ وَجْهَهُ كَمَا أَمَرَهُ اللَّهُ إِلَّا خَرَّتْ خَطَايَا وَجْهِهِ مِنْ أَطْرَافِ لِحْيَتِهِ مَعَ الْمَاءِ، ثُمَّ يَغْسِلُ يَدَيْهِ إِلَى الْمِرْفَقَيْنِ إِلَّا خَرَّتْ خَطَايَا يَدَيْهِ مِنْ أُنَامِلِهِ مَعَ الْمَاءِ، ثُمَّ يَمْسَحُ رَأْسَهُ إِلَّا خَرَّتْ خَطَايَا رَأْسِهِ مِنْ أَطْرَافِ شَعْرِهِ مَعَ الْمَاءِ، ثُمَّ يَغْسِلُ قَدَمَيْهِ إِلَى الْكَعْبَيْنِ إِلَّا خَرَّتْ خَطَايَا رِجْلَيْهِ مِنْ أُنَامِلِهِ مَعَ الْمَاءِ، فَإِنْ هُوَ قَامَ فَصَلَّى فَحَمِدَ اللَّهَ وَأَثْنَى عَلَيْهِ وَمَجَّدَهُ بِالَّذِي هُوَ لَهُ أَهْلٌ، وَفَرَّغَ قَلْبَهُ لِلَّهِ إِلَّا انْصَرَفَ مِنْ خَطِيئَتِهِ كَهَيْئَتِهِ يَوْمَ وَلَدَتْهُ أُمُّهُ

¹⁷ *Sūrat Hūd* (11:114)

¹⁸ *Ṣaḥīḥ al-Bukhārī* (#160) and *Ṣaḥīḥ Muslim* (#227)

There is not a man who brings forth the water for performing *wudhū'*, rinses his mouth, breaths water into his nose and blows it out, except that the sins of his face, mouth, and nostrils will drop. And if he then washes his face as Allāh has commanded him, the sins of his face will drop from the edges of his beard with the water. And then he washes his arms to the elbows except that the sins of his hands will drop from his fingertips with the water. And then he wipes his head except that the sins of his head will drop from the edge of his hair with the water. And then he washes his feet up to the ankles except that the sins of his legs will drop from his toes with the water. And if he stood up and prayed, and praised Allāh, extolled Him, and glorified Him by that which He is entitled to, and he empties his heart to Allāh, he will depart from his sins (and be) similar to his state on the day his mother gave birth to him.¹⁹

The difference between the prayers performed after the *wudhū'* mentioned in these *aḥādīth* and *ṣalāt-ut-tawbah*, is that in the case of the latter, the intention of performing *wudhū'* and praying is for the expiation of a sin committed – so the two are done specifically for the sin. In the case of the former, however, the prayer is a *sunnah mu'akkadah* (confirmed *sunnah*) for the purpose of having performed *wudhū'*, and the expiation of sins is a virtue and benefit of doing this.

In Summary: There is nothing confirmed from the Prophet (صلى الله عليه وسلم) about a *ṣalāt-ut-tawbah*, however, the action of praying with the virtues of having sins expiated is general with evidences that can be found in the Qur'ān and the *sunnah*, and more specifically when praying two *rak'āt* after performing *wudhū'*.

هذا والله أعلم

Harith Yarub Al-Shiraida

(أبو عبادة، حارث بن يعرب الشريدة الكندي)

January 23, 2017 / ٢٥ ربيع الثاني ١٤٣٨

¹⁹ *Ṣaḥīḥ Muslim* (#834)